

## **“THE CREATION OF ALL THINGS.”**

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**June 16, 2013, 6:00PM**

**Sermon Texts: Genesis 1:1-5; Psalm 104**

### **Introduction.**

Here is a little thought experiment for you (with thanks to Pastor Dan Phillips). What’s the most offensive verse in the Bible?

Lots of possible answers come to mind. The verses about homosexuality clearly offend some. The verses about wives submitting to husbands offend others. The verses in the OT about wiping out enemies, even women and children are hard to swallow. Or what about Jesus saying that the only way to the Father is through Him? Non-Christians love to poke at Christians with whatever verse of the day they find offensive or silly or totally out of touch with modern reality.

Would you like to know a good way to answer back? Why not fight fire with fire. Tell them they are missing the biggest and best verse of all. Tell them if they really are looking for the most offensive verse just start with the very first verse in the Bible.

“In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.”

Now that’s offensive! An absolutely sovereign God freely and independently of anything else created everything in the universe. Think about it. That means it’s all God’s and it’s all God’s doing. He’s the potter and we are the clay. He’s the creator and we’re the creature. God is God and we are not.

There are two options, submit or rebel, obey or disobey.

As another pastor put it (S. Lewis Johnstone), if you believe the first verse in the Bible, everything after that is completely believable. But if you reject the first verse in the Bible you start having trouble with the rest.

The doctrine of Creation is fundamental and foundational to everything else we believe. Do you believe that? Really, do you believe that Genesis 1:1 and Genesis 1 and 2 are the foundational building blocks for everything we hold dear in our faith?

Let me show you how this is true by showing you what happens when you take the foundation away. Last week’s Banner has an article by a retired CRC pastor, Edwin Walhout, titled, “*Tomorrows Theology.*”

He starts with a premise that evolution is not a theory but an established fact. He writes, “I am not going to argue whether or not evolution is true; I accept that the findings of modern science are reliable and must be taken as established fact.”

He goes on to say that competent scientist generally recognize that a big bang about 15 billion years ago started everything. Over time life appeared and matured and diversified over many millennia. Eventually homo sapiens formed from other life forms.

From that foundational premise he spends the rest of the article calling into question at least six key doctrines or theological understandings that we hold from Scripture and are summarized in our creeds and confessions.

He questions six day creation and that there was a real first couple, Adam and Eve. He questions a traditional view of the fall, challenging what sin is and where it came from. If Adam and Eve are not real, historical people then there can't be original sin. And if the doctrine of original sin has to be reconsidered then so does our understanding of what Jesus did on the cross and how that affects our salvation. Finally, he says if we take evolution seriously we have to rethink God's purpose behind all of this.

As I said, the doctrine of creation is foundational to all we believe, if the first domino falls, the rest soon fall. Get the first one wrong and you stand a very good chance of getting the rest wrong.

The fundamental issue behind every sin issue today is rebellion against our creator. The issue behind homosexuality, behind abortion, behind racism, behind all lust and greed and hatred and pride is rebellion against our creator.

In this cosmic war filled with principalities and powers, there is no Switzerland, no morally neutral ground. We are either under the dominion of darkness or of light. We are either children of wrath with Satan as our father or children of grace with God as our Father.

### **Genesis 1 and Creation and Belgic Confession Article 12.**

So let's begin at the beginning and lay as strong a foundation as we can with the building blocks of Scripture and the summary of the teaching of Scripture that we have in our confessions.

Brothers and sisters, let me begin with a very clear statement of faith. "I believe in God the Father Almighty, creator of heaven and earth."

The word genesis means beginning or beginnings. No one was there when it happened except God so we have to take His Word for it, His revelation to us to answer the *who, what, how, when and why of creation*.

#### ***First, Genesis answers the question who. In the beginning God ...***

This tells us that there is a creator creation distinction. There was first and always a God who was a creator. He is not creation nor a part of creation. And this creator is not named Big Bang.

This repeats what we read in Belgic Confession Article 10, that the Father created all things by means of or through the Son who is the Word (John 1:3; Colossians 1:16; Hebrews 1:2).

#### ***Second, Genesis answers the question what God did. In the beginning God created ...***

The Psalmist captures this beautifully in Psalm 104:1-34.

In the beginning God created all things visible and invisible, the heavens and the earth and all that is in them. He created the highest heavens, with it angelic beings. He created the middle heavens with all the galaxies and stars and sun and moon and planets. He created the lower

heavens with all the flying creatures. He created the earth and all that is in it and the seas and all that is in it.

He created the sun in mature form and the moon in mature form and the stars in mature form with their light already stretching from the stars to the earth.

God created fully grown trees, plants and animals, and a fully formed mature adult man from which He took a rib and created a fully formed mature adult woman. God said He did this, it's not deception that He created them with age.

God created a grown up universe. It's a bit like the novelist who starts telling a story that has adults in it. The world he creates in his novel is a grown up one. He doesn't start with everyone being born and then taking twenty or more year to get them to the point of the story were he wants to start.

***Third, Genesis answers the question how. God said, "Let there be light," and there was light.***

Creation is a series of speeches, of speech acts. "Let there be ... and there was."

**Psalm 33:6, 9** By the word of the Lord the heavens were made,  
and by the breath of his mouth all their host.  
9 For he spoke, and it came to be; he commanded, and it stood firm.

**Romans 4:17** ... the God ... who ... calls into existence the things that do not exist.

God did not create out of something, He did not create out of anything, He created all that is out of nothing at all. Where previously there was nothing, the whole universe came into existence.

The fancy word for this is God created ex nihilo, out of or from nothing. The reason God created ex nihilo is because only God is eternal, nothing else is eternal. There was nothing else from which to create something. God needed nothing to make everything.

God did not create by evolution.

Evolution says that:

"Life on earth evolved gradually beginning with one primitive species — perhaps a self-replicating molecule — that lived more than 3.5 billion years ago; it then branched out over time, throwing off many new and diverse species; and the mechanism for most (but not all) of evolutionary change is natural selection" (Jerry Coyne, *Why Evolution is True*, p. 3).

But there are huge problems with evolution. Evolution says that:

Something came from nothing. Only nothing comes from nothing.

Organic material came from inorganic material. How do you get life from rocks? There is no scientific evidence of life coming out of inorganic matter.

There should be fossil records of transitional life forms but there are none.

Random mutation and natural selection should produce complex biological features, but many scientists today are challenging that. The mathematical probability of DNA forming by chance is zero.

Evolution can't explain something from nothing and life from inorganic material.

Evolution denies the teaching of Scripture that plants and animals reproduce after their kind.  
Evolution denies the special creation of a first human couple, Adam and Eve.  
Evolution denies any purposefulness or meaningfulness to creation. It's just all random chance.

Evolution at best obscures and at worst denies God.

Darwin gave the modern world the tool it needed to get rid of God. Modern science is fundamentally idolatrous, it denies God. So why do we listen to it tell us that Genesis is wrong?

Science must bow to theology, not theology bow to science as Pastor Walhout seems to imply.

The Bible must rule science. One of the major problems with Pastor Walhout is that he lets the less clear general revelation (science, nature, creation) rule over the more clear special revelation (Scripture). He has it backwards and upside down.

***Fourth, Genesis answers the question when. God created by His Word in six days.***

The Belgic Confession Article 12 answers the when question by saying, "When it seemed good to Him, by His Word."

The "when" question was not a question in the 1500's. But that was before 1859 when Charles Darwin wrote, *The Origin of the Species*. Since then the Christian world has been very divided over the issue. Until then the church universally believed and taught six-day creation.

Until I am persuaded otherwise, I have cast my lot with the plain and simple traditional reading of Genesis 1 and 2 and God creating in six 24 hour days.

"And there was evening and there was morning, the sixth day."

There is nothing to indicate that normal days are not meant. Each day ends with the phrase "And there was evening and there was morning." The Ten Commandments clearly use the word to mean a 24 hour period:

**Exodus 20:11** For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is in them, and rested on the seventh day. Therefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day and made it holy.

Sure II Peter say with God "one day is as a thousand years and a thousand years as one day" (II Peter 3:8), but he was applying that to the day of Jesus' return. We can't just apply it randomly. After all none of us would say Jesus was in the tomb three thousand years.

It's poor exegesis and interpretation to take a verse in Revelation 20 or II Peter 3 and use it to explain a verse in Genesis 1. Sure not every number is literal, but some clearly are.

Furthermore, there couldn't be eons of time between day three with plants and day four with the sun and day six with insects to pollinate. I will have more to say about the problems of eons of time when we get to article 14 and Adam and Eve and the fall and the entrance of death.

Day is clearly defined as a period of light and a period of darkness, evening and morning.

***Fifth, Genesis answers the question why. God created everything for His glory.***

The creation account in Genesis exalts God. The vastness of space should open our eyes to the vastness and greatness of God in all His glory and splendor.

**Psalms 19:1** The heavens declare the glory of God, and the sky above proclaims his handiwork.

**Isaiah 43:7** everyone who is called by my name, whom I created for my glory, whom I formed and made.

**Romans 11:36** For from him and through him and to him are all things. To him be glory forever.

**Psalms 104:31-33** May the glory of the Lord endure forever; may the Lord rejoice in his works,  
32 who looks on the earth and it trembles, who touches the mountains and they smoke!  
33 I will sing to the Lord as long as I live; I will sing praise to my God while I have being.  
34 May my meditation be pleasing to him, for I rejoice in the Lord.

All of it cause (motivation) for worship. God is great, glorious and good and we are created to worship Him.

### **Application and Conclusion.**

This teaching of Scripture about creation and origins is crucial to our faith. We must not dismiss lightly all the attacks on it. This is nothing less than Satan attacking the foundations until he can bring the whole house down.

This is not a peripheral or side issue, this isn't some more theological hair-splitting over secondary matters.

Those who rebel against God's Word and God's authority rob God of His glory. And before long they are worshipping creation rather than the creator and very soon that rebellion and that idolatry become sexual filled with sexual confusion (Romans 2-3).

Not believing in six twenty four hour days for creation doesn't mean you are a heretic going to hell. But believing in evolution to the point that you question numerous fundamental doctrines of Biblical faith does place you in grave spiritual danger.

In the next weeks we will consider the creation of angels, the origin of demons and the nature of God's providence. Then we will return to a very important part of creation, the creation of man and the special creation of Adam and Eve. This is a huge debate right now whether they were a real, historical couple. And this has more implications for what we believe.

The Banner article is providential, it reminds us why our study of the doctrines of our faith in the Belgic confession are still relevant and so crucial to our day.

**Prayer:** God, our Father Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth, we praise you and worship you for the staggering manifestation of the glory of your eternal power, wisdom, and goodness in creation. Lord, it is almost too much to comprehend that each one of us is uniquely and purposefully and specially created by you for your glory. Our life is from you, our life is sustained by you, our life will return to you. Not a hair falls from our head without your will. Lord, our confidence is in no created thing, but in you the Creator of everything.